

I would like to comment on the Petition of Forbearance filed by BellSouth.

I am a user of an independent ISP, Sonic.net. Sonic provides my DSL connectivity via SBC wiring.

Although it would have been cheaper for me to go with SBC as an ISP, I chose Sonic because they provide better support and offer services that I am interested in. If SBC was my sole choice, my experience as a consumer would have been significantly moved to the negative end of the spectrum. I have observed the experience of others who use SBC as an ISP. They have oversold their external bandwidth, individuals often have connectivity problems, and technical support for these issues have been non-responsive.

If SBC is like this, when they have competition, how would allowing them to be the sole provider help me as a consumer? They would have no motivation to improve, and I would be hurt as a consumer.

BellSouth argues that other venues, such as cable modems, have monopolies that cut out other ISPs, and they want a level playing field. To that argument, I agree. But the approach should to force cable companies to allow competing ISPs access to the cable networks. If given a choice between using Sonic over DSL or Sonic over cable modem, I might have opted for cable modem access; but as a consumer, I was not even given that choice. And I was harmed by that.

Bellsouth's request would harm me as a consumer.

Thank you for your consideration.